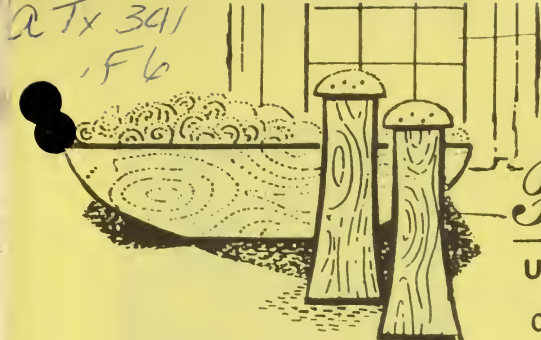


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# Food and Home Notes

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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Stir dry peas during cooking? Better not! Careless stirring, as well as rapid boiling, can cause dry whole and split peas to break up during cooking. "Do not stir" is a guide to keep the peas, both whole and split, at their eye-appealing best. Simmer peas, don't rapid boil. It's the gentle boil that brings out the best in 'em, according to USDA home economists.

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Hams labeled simply "cured" or "cured and smoked" must be cooked before you eat them. Cook them to an internal temperature of 160°F.

\* \* \*

A small amount of dry gelatin--about one-fourth ounce is often added before a can is sealed to cushion the ham during shipping. During processing, natural juices combine with the dry gelatin as the ham cools to form what may look like a "lot of gelatin." Gelatin is included in the net weight stated on the label.

\* \* \*

Canned products must be stored in a cool, dry place.

## ON HUMAN NUTRITION —Why Potassium?

Potassium is one of the mineral elements required by humans--fortunately, it is among the most plentiful minerals in the body. Potassium, like the related mineral sodium, is needed to keep a normal balance of water between the cells and body fluids. It is essential in the response of nerves to stimulation and in the contraction of muscles, and for proper functioning of cellular enzymes.

People who are told (by a physician) to go on a low or high potassium diet need information on the potassium content of foods, but most others in the U.S. get enough potassium as the usual daily intake (daily 2 to 6 grams; adequate to meet human needs according to reports by family economists at Agricultural Research Service of U.S. Department of Agriculture).

Some foods usually used only in small quantities are among the richest sources of potassium. These include dry milk, soy flour, dark molasses, dry brewer's yeast, cocoa powder. Many spices also contain more than 1,000 mg. of potassium in 100 grams of the product. Coffee and tea are also low in potassium.

## EXTENSION AGENT

### —on COMMUNICATING

Understanding food and the food marketing situation is the theme of the consumer programs featured by Louise Barker, Extension Service Food Marketing Agent in Tennessee whose excellence in communication has won her the award of "Outstanding Tennessean". The new award (she has received several) was presented to her by Governor Winfield Dunn of Tennessee for her broadcast work and National recognition in the state.



Louise Barker

The Davidson County agent, who represents the educational arm of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, has been working with emphasis in her food marketing communications on educating the consumer to buying the primal cuts of meat. She has been attempting to reach consumers through the mass media and obviously has done an outstanding job. As an Extension Agent, she has pointed the way for many others in her field who are constantly endeavoring to reach the public in an effort to offer help in what is happening with food today and how the consumer can make the most of what is available.

What started as an opportunity to have "air time" on WSM/TV (NBC) show called "Noon Show", the oldest, locally produced television show in Nashville —developed into a regular stint for the past 12 years. She now receives more mail than any other person on a regularly-produced Nashville show. People recognize her when she shops in supermarkets and stop her for advice. Louise's goal on this show is to present the story of food from the market to the table.

A column called "Food Market Basket" which appears in the Nashville Tennessean each Thursday is also part of her regular "reach and teach" approach.

In May she was presented with the "FM Radio Broadcaster of the Year" award at the convention of the American Women in Radio and Television.



Soon — nutritive values will appear on labels of many foods in supermarkets across the country. Food and Drug Program has set the rules on what nutritive values shall be shown.

## THE "WHY" OF NUTRITION LABELING

There are at least three ways how consumers can use nutrition information on labels according to the Consumer and Food Economics Institute at the U.S. Department of Agriculture. As in everything, unless you use what you've got -- having it is of no value. First, you must become aware of some of the nutrients required for growth and health. Foods vary in the kinds and amounts of nutrients they contain and a variety of foods is required to supply the amounts of these nutrients recommended daily.

Second, you need to compare nutritive values of different foods. Specifically, to compare amounts of calories, carbohydrate, and fat (and possibly fatty acids and cholesterol) in a serving of different foods; to learn which foods are worthwhile sources of protein, vitamins, and minerals; and to compare nutritive values of commercially prepared foods with those that they might replace in the diet.

The most meaningful comparisons for the food shopper will be those made among foods that might be substituted for each other in meals. Values for fresh whole milk might be compared with those for chocolate drink, cream cheese with American cheese, canned tuna with peanut butter, or orange juice with tomato juice. If you compare values of a food of one type with those of another-- milk with green vegetables, for example--it is not helpful.

Third, to plan food for a day that will provide recommended amounts of nutrients. Many foods that the consumer uses will not be labeled--this is a voluntary problem of nutritional labeling and all products will not be included. Therefore, the consumer will need certain information other than that on labels to plan food for a day. However, as nutrient labeling gets underway more tools for helping consumers to total nutrients for a day's food and to evaluate these tools will probably become available.

## CONSUMER MEAT SPECIALIST

### —and How To Buy

Consumer and professional groups, such as women's clubs, home economists' organizations, 4-H and Future Homemaker clubs and livestock producer organizations, can get expert advice from Sara Eason, consumer meat specialist with the Agricultural Marketing Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.



Money-saving tips on how to cut the tender part from a Choice grade blade chuck and broil it for a tender and juicy steak and how to buy right for your needs are all part of the tips that this consumer specialist puts on radio and television, as a public service.

As a consumer meat specialist, Miss Eason describes the conventional retail cuts and how to recognize them at the meat counter. She also presents USDA's Meat Acceptance Services to people involved in hotel, restaurant, institution, and school feeding operations.

In addition, an educational program is presented to large-scale meat buyers. She describes the work of the Federal meat grader under the Acceptance Service, and how the product is examined to meet the purchaser's specifications.

The Livestock Division also has exhibits which are used at large livestock meetings, state fairs, consumer meetings, and conventions.

Consumer letters pertaining to meat buying are directed to the Division and frequently answered by the consumer meat specialist. Radio and TV and press interviews may be arranged by contacting Sara Eason, Livestock Division, Agricultural Marketing Service, U.S.D.A., Washington, D.C. 20250.

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